



21st October 2020

Dear Students, Parents and Carers

**RE: Year 11 Prize Evening**

When I wrote to you back in September, we had hoped we would be able to gather on 12<sup>th</sup> November for GCSE Prize Evening to celebrate our students' results and present them with their certificates. It is with regret that we have taken the decision to cancel this event due to the current Covid-19 restrictions in place.

It is normally a lovely occasion to gather with our former pupils, to congratulate them on their results and find out how the next stage of their educational or training journey is progressing. Even though we are unable to gather in person to do this, we remain immensely proud of what they achieved during the most difficult of circumstances, it was not how we imagined the class of 2020 would leave St James'.

At Prize Evening, I would normally give a speech and whilst I am not able to do this in person, I would like to share a few thoughts with you.

Your results are a celebration for our St James' family and everyone who is part of it, be that a student, former student, parent, teacher or Governor. They are public recognition of all you have achieved over the last five academic years at St James'. This is an opportunity to reflect upon and acknowledge the efforts you have put in and recognise the vast talents that lie within our Catholic High School.

Your examination results are a wonderful springboard for future learning for every single one of our students but they are also a testament to the highly effective practice that goes on in the classroom at St James'. These achievements are down to excellence; a combination of highly inspiring and ambitious teaching and learning which takes place in the classroom at St James' and the care and dedication of our pastoral team. I particularly wish to mention Mr Cawley, as Head of Year 11, who I think does a really tremendous job and also to include our six Year 11 Form Tutors. I believe this pastoral unit of staff make a huge difference to the young people we serve.

We are hugely delighted with the achievements of our class of Year 11, despite the many extra hurdles put in their way by the Covid Pandemic, the Government and examination boards. I believe that it is our students that make our school so special. St James' Catholic High School is a 'fully comprehensive' school and we should celebrate this fact. We have students at this school from all walks of life and with the full range of abilities, skills, talents and experiences. We are in essence a microcosm of society within this very school. I am of the humble opinion that a comprehensive education here at St James' Catholic High School is so beneficial and useful in preparing all of our children for their future lives. Our role as teachers is to fully prepare our children as best as we can to be ready for life out in the world. Qualifications are obviously important and our main focus point through our value of excellence, but what about all those other skills and experiences required to be ready to make a positive contribution to society? Working with others, developing positive relationships, adaptability, patience, resilience, self-initiative, leadership qualities, the list is endless. I am of the firm belief that time spent at St James' equips our students better than they realise. I am sure that many of our former students will agree with me, having spent their first term at College, or maybe in an Apprenticeship or in the workplace. Having spent time within the St James' family you already have a head start in life compared to many of your peers.



# ST JAMES'

CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

Our school values of family, faith and excellence can be carried with you through your life journey and our value of faith will hold strong; "all things are possible for one who believes".

GCSE and BTEC certificates will be sent out by recorded delivery in November and this will be coordinated by our Examinations Officer Mrs Millar. If you do not receive your certificates by 14th November, please contact her via email [k.millar@stjamesheadle.co.uk](mailto:k.millar@stjamesheadle.co.uk) If you have changed your postal address since leaving St James', please contact Mrs Millar directly and before 3rd November so that we can update our records.

On behalf of the St James' family, I would like to once again congratulate all our young people on their achievements and wish them well in their continued education or training. Do keep in touch, we like to know how our former students are getting on.

Yours faithfully

Mr A Pontifex  
Headteacher